

And that's just the way it is.

RESTORATION TUESDAY: A  
DEMAND FOR DEMOCRACY

**HON. TERRI A. SEWELL**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 15, 2016*

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today on this Restoration Tuesday I rise to acknowledge the persistent need for new voting rights legislation, even after the 2016 general election.

Last week's presidential election was the first in over fifty years without the full protection of the Voting Rights Act of 1965—and it must be the last. The time to restore the fundamental civil right to vote for millions of Americans is always right now. This is not a request for reconciliation, this a deliberate demand for democracy.

Just one week ago today, American citizens faced voting restrictions in the forms of new photo ID requirements, DMV and voting poll closures, and significant reductions or elimination of early voting and weekend voting. Voting restrictions have been put in place in 22 states—14 of which had new restrictions for the first time in 2016, making it harder for millions of Americans to exercise their right to vote. This was unacceptable at the inception of the Constitution. This was unacceptable during the marches of 1965. How can we, as representatives of the American people, accept this blatant disregard to our democracy today? We need to make voting easier, not harder for the citizens of this country. We cannot and must not accept suppression of the vote.

According to a federal court, the State of Wisconsin had over 300,000 registered voters who lacked the ID required by new photo ID laws. In my home state of Alabama, new photo IDs were required and then over 30 DMVs were systematically closed down following the announcement of the new laws. On this past Election Day one week ago, there were 868 fewer polling places in states with a history of voter discrimination like Arizona, North Carolina and Texas.

The 2016 election may be over, but the fight for voting rights is far from finished. It is time to stop restricting access to the ballot box. It is time to show our country that we, as representatives of the American people, are using every tool at our disposal to prevent discriminatory voting practices. There is nothing more important in a democracy than ensuring that every citizen has an equal opportunity to let their voice be heard through their right to vote.

I urge my fellow Members of Congress to support a bipartisan effort to Restore the Vote. The Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2015 that I introduced reaffirms our commitment to voter equality and creating protected pathways to voter access. This legislation takes an expansive view of the need to protect access to the voting booth, and will offer more voter protection to more people in states including Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, and Texas. I urge all of my colleagues seated here today to pass legislation that will not just protect the

votes of minorities, but also those of students, the disabled, the poor, and those in the military and overseas.

We cannot forget the courage and dedication of those who marched and fought for voting rights in 1965. Let's not forget the lessons learned in 1965 and in the fifty years since as we have watched countless attempts to undermine our progress. As Civil Rights icon, Congressman, and my friend JOHN LEWIS will tell you, "There is still work to be done." Let's recommit ourselves to restoring the promise of voter equality. Partisanship cannot be prioritized over the people of America. Voter suppression has to stop now.

OUR GOD IN WHOM WE HAVE  
PLACED OUR TRUST

**HON. E. SCOTT RIGELL**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 15, 2016*

Mr. RIGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to include in the RECORD the following on behalf of my constituent, Rabbi Dr. Israel Zoberman. Rabbi Zoberman is the Founding Rabbi of Congregation Beth Chaverim in Virginia Beach, Virginia. He is a commissioner on the Virginia Beach Human Rights Commission and a past national Interfaith Chair for the Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA). Rabbi Zoberman asked me to include the following in the RECORD:

We have gratefully gathered on the auspicious occasion of our 7th annual Veterans Day service, at our uplifting communal home of the Reba and Sam Sandler Campus and the Simon Family JCC of our beloved Hampton Roads community. Let us proudly recall our heroes—past, present, and future—and their singular selfless and sacrificial devotion to our great American nation, as well as its undying legacy of democratic values and ideals, which remain a shining beacon of light to the entire free world for those in particular still living in the darkness of oppression.

We underwent a bruising vitriolic presidential election uncovering deep wounds and conflicting divisions within the American people on critical core issues. In the American way, we look forward to another peaceful, orderly, and gracious transition of power through ballots, not bullets, unlike some other countries. We will continue to abide by the high principles that have guided and preserved us as the world's leading democracy. Even as we pray for togetherness through the essential gift of unity, we are mindful that unity does not imply unanimity. We understand that our amazing diversity of people and ideas is the empowering source of our enviable strength as a superpower, and ultimately democracy depends on a vigorous debate, though with civility, of differing and even opposing views, including noxious ones, by all sides.

After all, the dynamics of periodic change are inherent in the governmental system we have called democracy, one that our founders wisely chose and devised for us to follow and participate in at the birth of the audacious experiment we call America. Humbling is the democratic proposition that constitutional power may change hands without abandoning

the underlying tenets that have lit our path, allowing us to live in freedom and flourish like no other nation. The British system insightfully speaks of the "loyal opposition." The recent contentious election points at "two Americas," or even more, and our goal is to build connecting bridges toward "a more perfect union." Both winners and losers (alternating in a democracy) belong to the one big tent of our American family. There is plenty of space for everyone in the inviting spirit of dialogue. All are needed in order to fully fulfill America's promise and mandate.

Our military heroes, including our Jewish American ones, are the essential and appreciated shared golden treasure, gloriously gluing together the disparate parts of our politic tapestry while protecting its very existence. Only yesterday we observed the 78th anniversary of Kristallnacht (the Night of the Broken Glass throughout Germany on November 9–10, 1938), the beginning of the end of European Jewry, orchestrated in the heart of so-called civilized Europe with disastrous consequences for humanity. The presence of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in our nation's capital is a poignant statement that democracies are vulnerable. Democracies require eternal vigilance and engagement of the caring, concerned, courageous, and compassionate citizenry, lest it becomes perverted from within due to extreme conditions and corrosive demagoguery with evil intent. The Jewish people can sadly attest that words do matter and bear fateful consequence. Human dignity and God's divinity go hand in hand.

These are unsettling and dangerous times. Children and adults are being bombed and starved with impunity in Aleppo, Syria. Millions of homeless refugees are again on the run. The Islamic State assaults civilization in Iraq and elsewhere. The Iranian government has acted belligerently, and Russia has emboldened aggression. I am painfully reminded of belonging to the surviving remnant (Sherit Ha'Pleta) of European Jewry, a time in which early childhood was spent in the Displaced Persons Camps of Austria and Germany, surrounded by barbed wire for protection, and whose father fought in the 118th Red Army infantry division outside Leningrad and Moscow. Having been privileged to live in our unique Hampton Roads for over 30 years, the most powerful hub of military in the world, whose mission is defending freedom's sacred cause, I am sharply cognizant of how powerless European Jews were during World War II and the Holocaust, and the difference the United States and the State of Israel make.

As we celebrate Thanksgiving, the American holiday par excellence, which is rooted in the Pilgrims' attachment to the Hebrew Scriptures and the Israelites' journey from bondage to freedom, we reflect on our nation's humble beginnings of fleeing refugees. We are duty-bound to give thanks for our measureless blessings, pledging to share them with the less fortunate in hopes that America will continue to be blessed. May we ever turn pain into promise, hatred into love, violence into vision, adversity into advantage, and trial into triumph with Shalom's holy peace of healing, hope, and harmony for all of God's children. Amen.